AMENDMENTS TO THE DRAWINGS:

The attached replacement drawing sheet including Figs. 1-5 should replace the originally filed drawing sheet including Figs. 1-5. Fig. 1 is amended to include a "Prior Art" label.

REMARKS

Favorable reconsideration of this application is respectfully requested in view of the previous amendments and the following remarks.

At the outset, the Examiner is kindly asked to make U.S. Patent No. 6,159,770 to Tetaka et al. officially of record via citation on a copy of Form PTO-892. This document is discussed in the Official Action but is not listed on the copy of Form PTO-892 accompanying the Official Action.

The title and drawings are amended to address the issues raised in paragraphs "2" and "3" of the Official action. Withdrawal of the objections to the title and drawings is therefore respectfully requested.

With respect to the issues raised in paragraph "5" of the Official Action, amendments to the claims are made to clarify aspects of the recited method without narrowing the claims. However, Claims 8 and 9 are not amended because those claims are directed to the structure of a microcircuit. Withdrawal of the rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph is therefore respectfully requested.

From a prior art standpoint, the Official Action rejects Claim 1, the only non-withdrawn independent claim, as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 6,744,634 to Yen in view of the above-discussed Tetaka patent.

Claim 1 recites a method for manufacturing a USB electronic key, including cutting out a microcircuit from a tape having a plurality of microcircuits, each microcircuit defining USB-format contact pads and carrying an electronic component connected to the pads, the method further including, in a single operation, adjusting the thickness of the microcircuit at least in the area of the contact pads, so as to have a thickness that conforms to the USB Standard.

The Yen patent discloses a USB interface. A printed circuit board 202 having metal connective pieces 111 is sandwiched between a base 113 and a jut piece 112 to form a USB connector 110, as illustrated in Fig. 6. The Official Action appears to take the position that Yen's USB connector 110 is inherently manufactured as recited in Claim 1, except that Yen does not disclose that the printed circuit board 202 having metal connective pieces 111 (which the Official Action refers to as a microcircuit) is cut out from a tape having a plurality of microcircuits. The Official Action goes on to state that Tetaka cures this deficiency in Yen.

The Tetaka patent discloses a method for fabricating a semiconductor device formed by a resin package. As discussed from line 58 of col. 24 to line 6 of col. 25, a tape member 133 is arranged so that resin packages 112 formed on a lead frame 120 are adhesively joined to the tape member 133. When the lead frame 120 is dissolved, the resin packages 112 remain attached to the tape member 133, and the tape member 133 can then be wound and shipped, as discussed in lines 6-25 of column 25.

Tetaka goes on to discuss various methods of breaking away of resin packages 412 from adhesive tape 463 from line 48 of col. 61 through line 44 of col. 63. For example, the method illustrated in Fig. 183 involves push-up needles 497 penetrating through the adhesive tape 463 to push up the resin packages 412.

However, aspects of Tetaka's resin packages 112 allowing them to be attached to and transported via tape are not shared by Yen's printed circuit board 202. Specifically, because the resin packages 112 are produced in an array on a dissolvable lead frame, the entire array can easily be attached to the tape once the tape is arranged as appropriate and the lead frame is dissolved. The Official Action

fails to explain how this use of tape for resin packages produced in an array on a dissolvable lead frame is at all relevant to printed circuit boards, which are produced by entirely different methods.

Accordingly, it would not have been obvious in view of Tetaka to have modified the method disclosed in the Yen patent to have provided the printed circuit board 202 on a tape having a plurality of printed circuit boards 202, much less cut out the printed circuit board 202 from such a tape.

Moreover, none of the breaking away methods disclosed in Tetaka involves cutting out a resin package from adhesive tape. Indeed, as Tetaka's resin packages are simply attached to the adhesive tape, and the adhesive tape itself does not form part of the ultimate structure of the finished product, they need only be separated from the adhesive tape, not "cut out". Accordingly, even assuming for the sake of discussion that some basis exists for modifying the method disclosed in the Yen patent in view of Tetaka, the modified method would not have included cutting out a microcircuit from a tape having a plurality of microcircuits.

Claim 1 is therefore allowable over Yen in view of Tetaka, and withdrawal of the rejection of Claim 1 is respectfully requested.

The dependent claims are allowable at least by virtue of their dependence from allowable independent claims. Thus, a detailed discussion of the additional distinguishing features recited in the dependent claims is not set forth at this time.

Early and favorable action with respect to this application is respectfully requested.

Should any questions arise in connection with this application or should the Examiner believe that a telephone conference with the undersigned would be helpful

in resolving any remaining issues pertaining to this application, the undersigned respectfully requests that he be contacted at the number indicated below.

Respectfully submitted,

BUCHANAN INGERSOLL & ROONEY PC

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